

Revelation 1-2

CHAPTER 1:

I. Introduction

V. 1

1. "Revelation" = first "which" = uncovering; unveiling; disclosure; appearing; coming; lighten; manifestation; from the Greek word from which we get our English word "Apocalypse" which is defined in Webster's--something viewed as a prophetic revelation; this word is singular not plural; this word is translated:

A. "Lighten" in Luke 2:32 speaking of the Lord Jesus. This refers to one of the purposes of the Incarnation (God robed in flesh)--to draw away the veil of darkness covering the Gentiles as was prophesied in Isa. 25:7.

B. "Manifestation" in Rom. 8:19.

C. "Coming" in I Cor. 1:7.

D. "Revealed" in II Thess. 1:7.

C. "Appearing" in I Peter 1:7.

2. "Jesus Christ" = "him" = Jesus the Christ:

A. "Jesus" = the earthly name of God incarnate (God robed in flesh); the Saviour of mankind.

B. "Christ" = the English word for the Anointed One of the OT or the Messiah.

C. This book is a book of prophecy and the inspired declaration of Divine will and purpose. (II Tim. 3:16) Prophecy in OT times was "foretelling" but now that the Bible has been completed (that which is perfect), prophecy is forth-telling which is equivalent to testifying (I Cor. 13:9-10)

D. It is all about the manifestation, the coming, and the appearing of Jesus Christ. This revelation is of Jesus Christ and not the revelations of the future but about a person and His involvement in the future. Also, this is not the revelation of St. John the Divine as is printed at the top of your Bible page--this is man's doing and there is no authority for this designation. In fact:

1) John refers to himself as "your brother and companion in tribulation" in verse 9.

2) He was a saint in the sense that all true Christians are saints--had the sanctification work of the Holy Spirit complete in all areas necessary--sin, righteousness, and judgment of John 16:8-11. (II Thess. 2:13)

3) He would be the last person to refer to himself as "divine."

4) He was the chosen instrument to be the human penman of the book but he was not "divine." (II Peter 1:21)

3. "God gave him" = God the Father gave to His Son--Jesus Christ; when Jesus left glory to be robed in flesh He laid aside the outward manifestation of His deity; Phil 2:6-8 declares plainly that He was God on earth, but humbled Himself and took on the form of a servant:

A. We learn in Luke 2:52 that as a boy He "increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."

B. We know from Heb. 5:8 that He "learned obedience by the things which He suffered."

C. In Mark 13:32 Jesus said that He didn't know when He was coming back for the saints while He was on the earth. But when He was exalted to the right hand of the Father, the Father gave unto Jesus the Revelation, which He gave to His angel, which He gave unto John, who was faithful to write it down so we can have the knowledge we need for the last days. The Father uncovered, unveiled, some things to Jesus.

II. The purpose of the Book--"To shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass."

4. "To shew" = to show; to give evidence or proof of a thing.

5. "Servants" = who are they? first they are "his" = Jesus Christ; some might say this refers to God, but Jesus is God (John 10:30); this shows ownership (I Cor. 6:19-20; I Peter 1:18-19) "servants" = means bondmen or bond-slaves of Jesus--saints; refers to one who is permanently in servitude and subjection to a master--that's why He has to be Lord at salvation.

6. To be called a "servant" or bond-slave means one who is:

A. Possessed by God or belongs to Him. In the ancient world, a master possessed his slaves as one possesses his tools.

B. At the disposal of God. In the ancient world, a master could do what he wanted with his bond-slave even having power of life or death over him. Really a Christian has no rights--they are totally surrendered to God.

C. Owes total obedience to God. A master's command was law in ancient time. The slave could only say "Lord, what would you have me to do? God's command is His law.

D. Must constantly be in the service of God. In the ancient world a bond-slave had no time of his own--no holidays, no leisure. All time belongs to the Master.

E. Bought with a price. Money was usually laid down for the price of a bond-slave in ancient time. Our Lord shed His blood on Calvary to pay our price. (I Cor. 6:19-20; I Peter 1:18-19)

F. Never to be put back on the slave block again. That is eternal security. (John 10:27-29; Rom. 8:38-39)

7. "Things" = second "which" = "it" = speaks of things recorded in the book.

8. "Must" = it is necessary; the Bible is divinely inspired and when God says certain things must come to pass, be sure that they will come to pass.

9. "Shortly" = quickly; speedily; in haste; this does not mean that these prophecies were to be fulfilled right away in John's day, but it indicates the swiftness of time in which they will be fulfilled when they begin; in this age of grace (man's designation) God is waiting in His longsuffering and forbearance to give men a chance to repent (Rom. 2:4; II Peter 3:9); but when the time comes for these judgments to fall, there will be no delays--the events will come to pass--speedily.

10. These things He shows to His servants who are the ones who can read and understand (I Cor. 2:9-11; revealed only by the Holy Spirit; I Cor. 2:14). The Holy Spirit also shows some things to an awakened sinner. (Psa. 25:8)

11. "He" = refers to the Lord Jesus.

12. "Sent" = to cause to be conveyed or transmitted.

13. "Signified" = to make known; proclaimed.

14. "Angel" = messenger; can be a pastor, prophet, any human being, a created being, or can even refer to Christ; here it seems it was prophet (Rev. 22:8-9); a fellow-servant is a designation that could not be attributed to the created angels of God; who might this prophet be?

A. Enoch. (Gen. 5:24)

B. Elijah who was taken into heaven by a whirlwind. (II Kings 2:1,11)

C. Moses who appeared with Elijah on the Mount of transfiguration in Mat. 17.

D. One of the saints resurrected with Jesus. (Mat. 27:51-53)

E. We really don't know who he was but know he was a prophet and fellow-servant. (Rev. 22:9) At any rate this book was sent to John by His messenger.

15. "John" = one of the sons of Zebedee; a fisherman by trade who dropped his net and followed Jesus (Mat. 4:21-22); one of the 12 apostles (Mat. 10:2); one of the three

apostles we refer to as an inner circle (Mat. 17:1); referred to as the one who Jesus loved in John 21:20; the human instrument the Holy Spirit used to pen down five books of the NT including this book--gospel of John, I, II, and III John, and Revelation (II Peter 1:21); he was a servant or bond-slave of our Lord; the one who faithfully bore record stated in verse 2.

V. 2

1. "Who" = John the beloved.
2. "Bare record" = one word in the Greek; to be a witness--to give a first hand detailed account of the three things mentioned in this verse:
 - A. "The word of God" = the OT and NT; the Bible; the truth (John 17:17) who is Jesus. (John 14:6)
 - B. "The testimony of Jesus Christ" = to give testimony for the purpose of communicating to others a knowledge of something not known to them, in this case "Jesus Christ;" it is a declaration which not only informs but strengthens a testimony borne by a witness who speaks with the authority of one who knows; simply means John passed on what the angel proclaimed to him without any alteration.
 - C. "All things that he saw" = refers to what was revealed to him, he faithfully wrote them down; these are summarized in verse 19 as "things in the past, present, and future.

IV. The Promise in the Book.

V. 3

1. "Blessed" = happy, but more; spiritually prosperous; a blessed person is one whom God makes fully satisfied, not because of favorable circumstances, but because He indwells the believer through Christ; is one who is in the world yet independent of the world--not of the world; his satisfaction comes from God and not from favorable circumstances.
2. "He that readeth" = in context probably refers to public readers they had in early churches; since they did not have printing presses there was a limited number of copies of the Scripture and it necessitated a public reader; practically, it applies to us as we read but we are commanded to do more--hear which requires study. (II Tim. 2:15)
3. "They that hear the words of this prophecy" = in context referred to those who listen to the public reader, therefore, both the reader and the hearer were blessed; refers to us who hear with an attentive heart.

4. "Words of this prophecy" = "there in" = refers to this book of Revelation; can have an application to the entire Bible for it is profitable for doctrine. II Tim. 3:16)

5. "Keep" = to attend to carefully; to guard, to observe; implies to obey and practice; means observing the things written in such a way that our practical conduct shall be governed by them.

6. "Those things" = "which" = refers to the commands and injunctions (the direction of a superior vested with authority) found in this book.

7. "Are written" = to form letters on parchment or other material; the tense in the Greek is perfect which means a past completed action with existing results; this book was written at a point in the past and it remains written and the devil can't do away with it no matter how hard he tries. (Mat. 24:35)

8. "Time" = the time of some decisive event.

9. "At hand" = means it is near.

10. This last phrase means the events that are written in this book are not long off till they will quickly come to pass. You say it has been 1900 years since this was written. True, but II Peter 3:8 states that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. These things are not long off as far as time is concerned.

V. The Message of the Book. V. 1:4-22:21

1. The things which thou has seen. V. 4-19

V. 4

1. "John" = the human instrument used by the Holy Spirit to pen down this book; written about 96 AD.

2. "To the seven churches which are in Asia" = these seven churches, listed in verse 11, are the ones the Holy Spirit wrote this book to primarily but this book of prophecy is written for all to read, hear, and keep.

3. "Churches" = ekklesia--Greek word which means a called out assembly; when relating to Christians it means a called out assembly of baptized believers who meet together to worship and glorify God; this word is plural, in fact he stated it to be seven; a church is local and visible--has to be to meet together--not universal and invisible; this word does not refer to a building as we are geared in our thinking; not made up of blocks, wood, mortar, brick, carpet, and pews, but people; I visited the area of Turkey in 1974 where these churches were located; all we saw was ruins of the cities but the seven churches had no building to worship in; our guide even stated in one place that the first church building was built in 313 AD; he was referring to a Catholic church building built just after Constantine had his army baptized in a river in 312 AD--the beginning of the Catholic so-called church.

4. "Seven" = speaks in Bible numerics as completion or perfection; the number seven is used more frequently in the Bible than any other number; God completes His work in cycles of seven; seven colors make a perfect spectrum; seven musical notes make up the scale; seven days make up a week; at the fall of the Jericho walls there were seven priests, seven trumpets, and on the seventh day the people marched around the wall seven times; there are seven feasts of Jehovah God; there are seven mysteries in kingdom parables in Mat. 13; seven sayings of the Saviour from the cross; in Revelations the number seven appears 49 times or seven times seven.

5. John wrote to seven literal churches even though there were more present in this area. (Col. 4:13--Colosse and Hierapolis) Even though he wrote primarily to seven churches, he is speaking to us all today. Why did he choose seven churches. Because they represent the complete church age and the prophetic unfolding of the history of the church age. We are living in the Laodicean era today--the lukewarm church age.

6. "Asia" = location of these seven churches; today their location is in Turkey which is part of Asia.

7. "Grace" = undeserved favor; this is not justifying grace of Eph. 2:8 but sanctifying grace because it is written to bond-slaves--saints; this grace is undeserved but available to overcome the evil snares of sin; this grace keeps you from throwing in the towel and quitting; this grace keeps you keeping on for His glory; this grace lets you live victorious even in this evil world; grace to live with a thorn in the flesh (II Cor. 12:8); this is the grace one needs to die by; this is that new grace we sing about "That I've not needed before;" that is the grace John writes to us about.

8. "You" = saints in the seven churches; also applies to all saints in every age.

9. "Peace" = this is not the justifying peace with God (Rom. 5:1) but sanctifying peace of God that comes by 1) worrying about nothing, 2) praying about everything, and 3) thanking God for anything (Phil. 4:6-7); then the peace of God which passeth all understanding will guard you; peace is not the absence of trouble and trials but the presence of a person--Lord Jesus. (Eph. 2:14)

10. "From" = indicates the source of this grace and peace--the triune God--all three persons of the Godhead.

A. "Him" = "his" = the Father "which is, and which was, and which is to come" = phrase which reveals the Eternal God who had no beginning nor will He have an end; "which" = who; God is a person not a thing, therefore this is masculine gender not neuter; pick any beginning you want and God was already there. (Gen. 1:1; John 1:1)

B. "The seven Spirits" = the Holy Spirit who is sevenfold in His operation; seven is the number of completion, therefore, this symbolizes the fulness of the Holy Spirit; Isa. 11:2 lists these sevenfold manifestations of the Holy Spirit; these seven Spirits "are before his throne" = they are in the presence of God the Father; this reveals the Spirit's submissiveness to His responsibility of lifting up the Lord Jesus--the Holy Spirit always points to Christ. (John 16:13-15)

V. 5

C. "Jesus Christ" = John lists three identifications of Him:

1) "The faithful witness" = this title was first given to Christ in Isa. 55:4; "faithful" means to be trusted; reliable; dependable; having or showing a strong sense of duty or responsibility; "witness" in Websters means one who can give a first hand detailed account of something but this word means much more than that; the same Greek word is translated "martyrs" in Rev. 17:6 and "martyr" in Rev. 2:13 = one who bears witness by his death, which denotes one who declares that which is true--what he has seen or heard or knows; Jesus sealed His witness with His own blood because He was faithful; in so doing this--He fulfilled His office as **prophet**--a faithful prophet testifying to the truth even to the extent of dying for the truth; others have done this down through the ages (Ex. Antipus in Rev. 2:13 called "my faithful martyr") but none went as far as Jesus, thus, the definite article "the" is placed in front of "faithful witness" denoting His being faithful unto death like no other man; in John 17:1 Jesus prayed "the hour is come" and in John 17:4 He said, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." Then in John 19:30, while on the cross, He said, "It is finished;" the paths of men are strewn with failure and even wreckage but He never compromised; that's why it can be said of Him that He is "the faithful witness."

2) "The first begotten of the dead" = the first born out from among the dead; this is in regard to Christ being the first who rose from the dead, no more to die; this speaks of His fulfilling His office of **Priest**--after the resurrection He sprinkled His own blood on the mercy seat, then sat down at the right hand of the Father, thereby becoming the highest of those raised from the dead. (Heb. 7:23-25; Psalms 89:27)

3) "The prince of the kings of the earth" = "prince" = ruler; leader; chief of kings; this speaks of His fulfilling His office of **King**; when you read the OT you see strange and unusual things the Kings did; why did they do that?--because their heart was in His hand (Pro. 21:1); the devil is called the prince (ruler) of the power of the air (Eph. 2:2) and god of this world (II Cor. 4:4) and in Mat. 4:8-9 the devil offered the kingdom of this world to Jesus and they were his to offer, but Rev. 11:15 reveals that one day He will fulfill His office of king; the Bible makes it clear that He is: a) "king of heaven" Dan. 4:37; b) "King of the Jews" Mat. 2:2; c) "Lord of Israel" John 1:49; d) "the king of the ages" I Tim. 1:17; e) "the king of glory" Psalms 24:7; f) "the mighty prince of the kings of the earth" Dan. 8:55; g) "King of Kings" Rev. 19:16; h) "only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords" I Tim. 6:15; men on earth who call themselves Potentates are trying to take the place of Christ who the Bible says is "the only Potentate."

1. The message of grace and peace (verse 4) is not just from the Father and the Holy Spirit, but also from "Jesus Christ" = "him" = "his" = this enables us to live victoriously and keep on keeping on and to live a consecrated, dedicated life.

2. No wonder John's heart begin to overflow in praise for three great things of our salvation.

A. Motive of Cross--"loved us."

3. "Us" = "our" = the saved; John included himself in this.

4. "Loved" = agape; God kind of love:

A. He loved us in our unloveliness.

B. He loved us while we were foul, unclean, and unwashed.

C. He loved us in our sins, while we were dead in trespasses and sins. (Eph. 2:1, 4-5a)

D. He loved us even when we were ungodly, sinners, and enemies. (Rom. 5:6,8,10)

E. The phrase "loved us" in the English is past tense, but in the Greek it is present tense--loveth--which speaks of continuously, always, and forever; he uses this tense to mean:

1) That before the foundation of the world He loved us.

2) In the days of His flesh He loved us.

3) In the day of His cross He loved us.

4) Being ascended back to glory, He still loved us.

5) When we've been there 10,000 years, He still will love us.

F. No wonder John burst into praise. Do you know where he was? Do you know what condition he was in? He had been banished to the barren isle of Patmos for his stand for Christ and left there to die. And even there John knew the Lord loved him.

B. The act itself--"washed us from our sin in his own blood."

5. He washed us in one great, mighty atoning act--when He died on the cross of Calvary and shed His blood for our sin. This speaks of justification and the tense reveals a one time occurrence in past time never to be repeated again--eternal security. All saved will have to say "I was washed in the past tense." This is done by His blood, not by water of baptism. We do not work for cleansing. We are not good enough for it. We do not reform for it. We do not do penance for it. It is something we receive by saving faith from the gracious hands of our Lord.

C. The result--He assigned us places of service and dignity and honor.

1. "Us" = the saved--saints.

2. "Hath made" = to become a new creation (II Cor. 5:17); refers to the point of salvation.

3. "Kings" = ruler of a people; one who has authority over others; the saints will rule and reign with the Lord during His 1000 year reign. (Rev. 20:6; II Tim. 2:12; Ex. the parable of the pounds--Luke 19:17); the lowliest and humblest man on earth when he is saved is exalted and lifted up and made a king; he may be a pauper and wear pauper's rags down here but if he is saved, he is a king and will reign on earth. (Rev. 5:9-10)

4. "Priests" = one who offers sacrifices and in general is busied with sacred rites--the manner of performing divine or solemn service as prescribed by God; called a holy priesthood in I Peter 2:5 which refers to being a recipient of the "sanctification work of the Spirit" (II Thess. 2:13) which is His reproof work of John 16:8-11; called a royal priesthood in I Peter 2:9 which refers to a body of kings who minister as priests to God; the change of the priesthood through the Bible is listed as follows:

A. Before the law was given, the head of each family was a priest. (Ex. Job in Job 1:5)

B. When the law was proposed, Israel was shut up as a kingdom of priests. (Exo. 19:6)

C. Israel violated the law and God shut up the priestly office to the family of Aaron of the tribe of Levi.

D. When the veil of the temple was rent, grace was ushered in and all believers now are unconditionally constituted a "kingdom of priests" as this verse brings out.

E. As priest we have access through the High Priest. (Heb. 4:16)

F. A priest was one who offered sacrifices and so should we. But they are not blood sacrifices like OT priests. We are to offer:

1) Our bodies. (Rom. 12:1) Living sacrifices, not dead.

2) Praise to God. (Heb. 13:15)

3) Our substance. (Heb. 13:16) We are to share (communicate) what we have been given with others, such as material things and the insight the Holy Spirit has given us from the Word of God.

G. As a priest we should be an intercessor. (I Tim. 2:1) In Col. 4:12 Epaphras is an example, for he was shut up in prison (Phm. 1:23) no longer able to preach, but he was still fulfilling his office as priest for no prison could keep him from the throne of grace.

5. "Unto God" = in context this refers to Jesus Christ who is God. (John 10:30)

6. "His" = "him" = the Lord Jesus Christ.

7. "His Father" = refers to God who is the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ.
8. Now John's heart begins to overflow in praise for the three-fold work our Lord accomplished on the cross.
9. "Glory" = the excellence of God's presence manifested to men; manifestation of that which brings forth praise; to praise; honor; majesty; dignity; to give God glory is to show forth to the world the correct opinion or estimate of who God is.
10. "Dominion" = means power in the sense of a ruler; sovereign; chief; above all others; supreme (Mat. 28:18); suggests His omnipresence and describes the infinite control our Lord exerts over the universe. (Col. 1:17)
11. "For ever and ever" = to the ages of ages; there will be no end to His glory and dominion.
12. "Amen" = truly; verily; so be it; may it be fulfilled; we too should be able to say the same thing.

V. 7

1. "Behold" = a word used to cause the reader to pay careful attention to what is about to be said; turn your ears to it; listen to me.
2. "He" = "him" = the Lord Jesus Christ.
3. "Cometh" = to come from one place to another; our Lord is now at the right hand of the Father (Heb. 1:3) where He went after the first advent (the coming of Christ in the flesh) and one day He will come in the second advent (the coming of Christ to judge the world); this involves two parts--one in the air when He raptures (not a Bible word but a Bible principle) His saints at which time He pours out His wrath upon those left behind and then a short time later He comes and sets His feet upon this earth and ushers in His 1000 year reign.
4. "With clouds" = clouds are appropriate symbols of majesty, and God is often represented as appearing in that manner; His presence with the children of Israel was indicated by a pillar of a cloud (Exo. 13:21); our Lord ascended in a cloud when He ascended to heaven 40 days after the resurrection and two angels told the apostles that He would come in like manner--clouds (Acts 1:9-11); Christ, in giving the vision of end times to four of His apostles, said the Son of man would come in the clouds of heaven (Mat. 24:30; Mark 13:26; Luke 21:27) to gather His saints--elect (Mat. 24:31; Mark 13:27; Luke 21:28); the Lord told Caiphas He would come in the clouds of heaven (Mat. 26:64; Mark 14:62); clouds are associated with the first part of Christ's coming when He comes in the air for His saints (I Thess. 4:16-17); this is what is called the Rapture--caught up (rapture is not a Bible word but a Bible principle).

5. "And every eye shall see him" = He will be made visible in His glory to all that dwell upon the earth; because of this phrase and the tradition of man, most want to say this is the second part of His coming when He sets His feet upon the earth; but this is the first part of His second coming when He comes in the air with clouds; tradition says that there is going to be a "secret rapture" and only the saved will see Him and the rest will wonder where everybody has gone--those missing; the problem with this tradition is that this is just not so; the "secret rapture" theory was coined by the phrase "the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night" in I Thess. 5:2; but if a thief comes with a "shout, voice of the archangel, and trump of God" (I Thess. 4:16) everyone in the house will be awakened and "every eye shall see him;" Note: in Mat. 24:30, Mark 13:26, Luke 21:27, "They shall see the Son of man coming in clouds" = rapture; this corresponds to Rev. 6:16 where every eye sees Him; the problem with tradition is that they believe "easy in" (easy believism which doesn't produce salvation), "easy out;" again this is just not so; every eye will see the Lord Jesus when He comes in the rapture.

6. "They *also* which pierced him" = seems to refer to sinners whose sins had been the cause of the death of the Lord Jesus; this most likely does not refer to those who literally put Jesus to death for they are dead and will not be raised until the Great White Throne of Judgment which is 1000+ years after the rapture (Rev. 20:11-13); all saints pierced Him and those alive will see Him at the rapture.

7. "Kindreds of the earth" = tribes and nations on the earth.

8. "Wail" = means properly to beat, to cut; then to beat or cut one's self in the breast as an expression of sorrow; and then to lament; to cry aloud in intense grief; this is because they will be overwhelmed with the apprehension of the wrath to come. (Rev. 6:15-17; Isa. 2:19)

9. "Because of him" = on account of their treatment of Him.

10. The sad thing is that all those of the earth left behind after the rapture will not be able to be saved. The day of grace has ended and the great day of His wrath is come.

11. "Even so" = a primary participle of strong affirmation; truly; verily; assuredly.

12. "Amen" = so be it; may it be fulfilled; here the double emphasis is strong affirmation that it will be so, rather than the expression of a wish or desire.

V. 8

1. "I" = "the Lord" = who is speaking; who does this refer to?

A. Some say this refers to God the Father who gave the revelation to Jesus (verse 1). Also in verse 4 the Father was identified as "him which is, and which was, and which is to come"--the same designation stated in this verse. He is also identified as "the Almighty" which is a name usually attributed to God the Father. (Exo. 6:2-3)

B. Others say this refers to the Lord Jesus Christ since He definitely refers to Himself as "Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end" in Rev. 21:6; 22:13. Also the Lord Jesus was referred to as "The mighty God" in Isa. 9:6.

C. It really doesn't matter which One it is for in John 10:30 Jesus said, "I and my Father are one." After studying this out I'm inclined to believe this refers to the Lord Jesus Christ who is the One this book is about.

2. "Alpha and Omega" = the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet; this is the equivalent of "the beginning and the ending;" our Lord is the A and the Z--the first and the last (verse 17) letters of our alphabet and all that is in between.

3. "Lord" = a title of honor expressive of respect and reverence; Jehovah--the Lord Jesus Christ.

4. "Which" = who; our Lord is a person not a thing, therefore this is masculine gender not neuter.

4. "Which is, and which was, and which is to come" = phrase which reveals the eternal God who had no beginning nor will He have an ending; this applies to the Lord Jesus since John 1:1 states clearly the Word who is Jesus was with (face to face; thus present) God the Father in the beginning--pick any beginning you want and both the Father and Son were there; also "was" in John 1:1 means existent without origin; this phrase refers to the One who created all-things, the One who controls all things, and the One who will consummate all things. (Col. 1:16-17)

6. "The Almighty" = sovereign; chief; supreme; the all ruling, omnipotent One; the all powerful One; this is the equivalent of the Hebrew word "Shaddai" which means the multi-breasted one, the Nourisher, the Strength-giver, and Satisfier; the One who pours Himself into the life of the believer; as a fretful, unsatisfied babe is strengthened and nourished from the mother's breast the believer is also quieted, rested, and satisfied by the Almighty.

V. 9

1. "I" = "John" = the human instrument used by the Holy Spirit to pen down this book; he identified himself as:

A. "Your brother" = from the same womb--womb of Holy Ghost conviction (John 16:8-11); refers to others who are saved since they are the only ones who truly can understand this book (I Cor. 2:14); this simply means John was no super human being but was subject to like passions as we are.

B. "Companion" = fellow-partaker; speaking to all the saints--servants--bondslaves--to whom this book is written (verse 1); partakers of what:

1) "Tribulation" = grievous affliction, pressure, or distress; speaks of persecution; all saints will suffer. (II Tim. 3:12; Acts 14:22)

2) "In the kingdom of Jesus Christ" = John had a hope and expectation of the literal kingdom in which Christ will rule and reign.

3) "In the patience of Jesus Christ" = the hope and expectation of the kingdom reign of Christ caused him to have "patience" = steadfastness that moves forward; the quality of an individual that doesn't surrender to the circumstances or succumb to trials (Rom. 5:3); this hope caused him to endure tribulation.

2. "Jesus" = the earthly name of God incarnate (God robed in flesh); the Saviour of mankind.

3. "Christ" = the English word for the Anointed One; the Messiah of the OT.

4. "Isle" = Island "that is called Patmos" = a rugged and bare island in the Aegean Sea off the coast of Ephesus; a snake infested, barren place about 10 miles long and 7 miles wide; a place where prisoners were banished to die.

5. Why was he there?

A. "For the word of God" = on account of the Word of God--for preaching the gospel; the OT and NT; the Bible; the truth.

B. It is the Word "of God" because He breathed it (II Tim. 3:16) and moved on Holy men to accurately pen it down. (II Peter 1:21)

C. "The testimony of Jesus Christ" = John did not go there to bear testimony of the Lord Jesus on that island, either by preaching or recording the vision in this book, but he was carried there to die by Rome because he had preached the doctrines which testified of Christ.

6. John had been faithful of standing up and preaching the Word of God without fear or favor; therefore, he was banished to the isle of Patmos to die. Even with all the conditions that surrounded John, he did not complain, grumble, or gripe. The only reason he gave this verse was to state the facts as to his condition. But he did not let the conditions stop him from worshiping on the Lord's day.

V. 10

1. "I" = "me" = John.

2. "In the Spirit" = refers to being favored with the influences of the Holy Spirit: John was attended with rich spiritual influences on his soul.

3. "The Lord's day" = properly means pertaining to the Lord; this refers to some day which was distinguished from all other days of the week and which would be sufficiently designated by that term; this is not the Sabbath or the word "Sabbath" would have been used; this term was used by the early Christians to denote the first day of the week when the churches met together to worship and glorify the Lord; called the "Lord's day" because the Lord arose from the dead at the beginning of that day which would correspond to 6:00 PM on our Saturday--this is the time the Jewish day began.

4. John had set apart this day in honor of the Lord Jesus as his prevailing custom was. Though he was alone, he was engaged on that day in acts of devotion. This represents a great truth--God can meet His people anywhere. This does not mean we are not to assemble on the Lord's day. (Heb. 10:25; I Cor. 16:2) John could not assemble--did not have a church to attend, there was none available. There was no one to keep a record of his attendance, no sermon to be heard, and no Sunday School pins to be received, yet he still heeded the Spirit's leading and made him a place to worship out under the heaven, and his spirit was in communion with a better world and he heard from the Lord.

5. "Heard" = to perceive by the ear what is announced in one's presence.

6. "Behind me" = he heard the voice before he saw anything.

7. "Great voice" = a loud voice in a language John understood; must have come as a surprise since he was all alone on the island of Patmos--he thought.

8. "As of a trumpet" = loud and powerful as a trumpet; this does not mean that the tones of the voice resembled a trumpet, but only that it was clear, loud, and distinct as a trumpet; we get our English word "megaphone" from this Greek word for "great;" "as" is a simile--a figure of speech in which one thing is likened to another; this is important to note in Revelation because many times things are given as literal and many times they are written to be "as" or "like" which denotes a simile; therefore, this voice was as a trumpet--loud and powerful.

V. 11

1. "Saying" = to point out with words; by using "as a trumpet" (verse 10) indicates:

A. That which was spoken was of public importance and all needed to hear; a trumpet was used in Num. 10:2 for calling the assembly together to hear something of importance.

B. That the message that was about to be spoken was one of distinction or one that was very clear. (I Cor. 14:7-9) God commanded Isaiah in Isa. 58:1 to "lift up thy voice like a trumpet" which means for Isaiah to cause the message to be clear, loud, and powerful because it is of importance to all and they need to hear.

2. "I" = the Lord Jesus Christ.

3. "I am" = the self-existent One; these words alone were enough to startle a Jew for they knew the Scripture and knew that Jesus was saying He was the One who met Moses at the burning bush and told him to tell the Israelites that "I AM" had sent him to deliver them. (Exo. 3:13-14)

4. "Alpha and Omega" = the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet; this is equivalent of "the first and the last;" our Lord is the A and the Z--the first and the last letters of our English alphabet and all that is in between.

5. "Thou" = John the human instrument, the Holy Spirit used to pen down this book. (II Peter 1:21)

6. "What thou seest" = about to see; refers to what the Lord was about to reveal to him.

7. "Write in a book" = this book of Revelation.

8. "To send" = to bid a thing to be carried to one.

9. "Churches" = plural; singular refers to a group of baptized believers who meet together to glorify the Lord; a called out assembly; the only called out assembly that exists today is the local church of which there are many, which are only types of the church of the firstborn (Heb. 12:23) which will be called out at the rapture and then there will be a called out assembly in heaven, which will be a local visible body.

10. "Seven" = Bible number of completion; even though there are only seven churches mentioned by name, the message to all seven needs to be heeded by all churches, even in our day.

11. "Which are in Asia" = located in the area today known as the country of Turkey.

12. John had ministered in the area of these seven churches but was separated from them because he had been banished to the Isle of Patmos for his stand for Christ and now the voice told John to send a message to these seven churches--Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamas, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. The message to each of these individual churches are recorded in Chapters 2 and 3. We will deal with each one of these churches and their message when we get to Chapter 2.

V. 12

1. "I" = "me" = John.

2. "Turned" = a natural reaction to see who it was that spoke to him in this solitary and desolate place.

3. "To see the voice that spake with me" = to see the voice means here to see the person who spoke to him.

4. John turned expecting to see a person but the first thing that caught his eye was "seven golden candlesticks" = what this phrase means is clearly identified in verse 20--they are the seven churches mentioned by name in verse 11 but they are representative of all churches and also of the entire church age.

5. "Golden" = speaks of righteousness--Christ's righteousness.

6. "Candlesticks" = lamp-stands; something to bear up the light for all to see; churches are not the Light and have no light of their own and neither do we as individuals but we are to reflect the Light; in John 8:12, Jesus said, "I am the light of the world;" and in John 12:32, He said, "If I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all *men* unto me."

7. Each church has the responsibility to lift up Jesus, the Light, to a world in darkness. That is why we are admonished in Phil. 2:12-16a "to work out"--shine as lights in a dark world--reflect by "holding forth the word of life." Only true churches have true light.

V. 13

1. John not only saw the churches (candlesticks) but he saw the Lord Jesus standing in the midst so as to be encircled by them.

2. "*One* like unto the Son of man" = there is no definite article in the Greek, therefore, it is "*one* like unto a Son of man;" = the language indicates John did not at first know that it was the Lord Jesus until He identified Himself to John in verse 18.

3. Jesus when robed in flesh "took part of the same" as man, (Heb. 2:14) thus, He was called the Son of man. John did not recognize Him because he was not used to seeing Him attired as He is described here.

4. "Clothed with" = having been clothed with; the tense in the Greek is perfect which means an act completed in past time with existing results; at some point, probably when Jesus ascended to the right hand of the Father, He was clothed with a garment down to the feet and remains that way at this present time; John did not recognize Jesus in this garment which indicates He was not attired in this garment when He appeared to His disciples during the 40 days between the resurrection and ascension.

5. "A garment down to the foot" = one word in the Greek; a stately robe reaching down to the feet, or the ankles, yet so as to leave the feet themselves visible for John could see His feet in verse 15; also this is the same word used in the OT to describe:

A. The holy garments the high priests were to wear. John saw Jesus in His High Priestly robe.

B. The royal garments the kings wore. John saw Jesus in His royal apparel.

C. The robe of a judge. John saw Jesus standing ready to judge.

6. "Girt about" = to bind by surrounding with any flexible substance; the tense in the Greek is perfect which means an act completed in past time with existing results; at some point, probably when Jesus ascended to the right hand of the Father, He was girt about the paps with a golden girdle and He remains that way at this present time; John did not recognize Jesus girted in such a way which indicates He was not attired in such a way when He appeared to His disciples during the 40 days between the resurrection and ascension.

7. "Paps" = breasts.

8. "Golden" = made of gold; speaks of righteousness.

9. "Girdle" = something like a belt, a wide belt which was used to hold the garments in place; speaks of righteousness and faithfulness. (Isa. 11:5)

10. In ancient time, when a man was to serve, or run, or work, he girded up his loins. He gathered up the skirts of his flowing garment underneath the girdle or belt that was around his waist, in order that he might move without hindrance. But this girdle was about His breast. This speaks of one being in a calm repose or at rest, thus speaking of the Kingly rest of the Son of God who sits at the right hand of the Father.

11. These attributes characterize the Lord in all His ways. He is righteous and faithful. (I Thess. 5:24)

V. 14

1. "His" = the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. "His head and *his* hairs were white like wool, as white as snow" = this refers to His hair as being exceedingly or perfectly white; John's first thought was white like wool, and then the thought occurring of its extreme whiteness resembling snow--the purest white of which the mind conceives; it just means radiant and bright and signifies majesty, authority, and glory which occurred for a few moments at the transfiguration in Mat. 17:2; still He is not described as here; this description reminds us of:

A. Daniel's vision in Dan. 7:9. Ancient of days stands for great age and speaks to us of the eternal existence of Jesus Christ, the Son.

B. Divine purity spoken of in Isa. 1:18 where similar terms were used when dealing with sin.

C. Wisdom and experience. (Pro. 20:29)

3. "His eyes *were* as a flame of fire" = bright; sharp; penetrating; speaks of judgment--the penetrating discernment that searches the inmost heart; when Peter denied the Lord the third time, those penetrating eyes caught his attention (Luke 22:61-62); Daniel 10:6

says "His eyes are as lamps of fire;" Heb. 4:13 speaks of His omniscience--knows all things.

V. 15

1. "His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace" = "brass" is the symbol of judgment of God upon sin; "burned in a furnace" means as a furnace that glowed, or shined with glittering rays; "brass" also stands for strength and for the immovable steadfastness of God; the shining, glittering rays stand for speed, for swiftness of the feet of God to help His own or to punish sin.

2. It was upon these feet, called the feet of beauty, He came preaching the gospel of peace. (Isa. 52:7) But when He comes again, He shall tread down all abominations and crush those who hated him. (Rev. 14:19-20) This is He whose feet treads the winepress of the wrath of Almighty God. It is the judgment of Christ upon human sin. Sin is going to be judged by God, either in yourself or on the Cross. (Rom. 6:23a)

3. Here is the best description of the Lord. Notice there is no description of His face. Do not be deceived by the so-called pictures of Jesus on the walls today. Exo. 20:3-5 speaks of not making any likeness or image to bow down and worship. There is no scripture that gives any credit to the picture we see of Jesus, so-called. In fact Isa. 53:2 reveals there was nothing about Jesus' personal look that would draw your attention to Him. Thus, this description John gives would better fit our Lord than the pictures we have printed of Him, so-called, but how can a person portray this in a painting?

4. "His voice as the sound of many waters" = in verse 10 John described His voice as being great--as of a trumpet = loud and powerful; now John describes it as the sound (same Greek word as "voice" in verse 10) of many waters; compare a rippling brook to where many streams form rivers and convene in one water fall, such as the Niagra Falls--people say they are deafening.

A. This is the same One who spoke to Elijah at Mt. Horeb in a still small voice--gentle breeze.

B. The same One who in Gen. 1 said "Let there be light" and "Let us make man."

C. The Psalmist described this voice in Psa. 29:3-9.

5. We need to remember we are coming to a point where the Lord is about to tread the winepress of the wrath of Almighty God. The context is speaking of judgment. How terrifying will be the sentence when with a great voice, as a trumpet, loud and powerful, and as the sound of many waters, the Son of God shall say on Judgment day, "Depart." (Mat. 25:41; 7:22-23) Oh, how terrible that voice of many waters will be! But now you can hear the voice of a gentle breeze saying "Come." (Isa. 55:1; Rev. 22:17; John 6:37)

V. 16

1. "He" = first three "his" = the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. "Stars" = are called a mystery and identified in verse 20 as angels who are messengers, ministers, and in this case refers to the pastors of the seven churches mentioned in verse 11 and chapters 2-3.
3. "In his right hand" = place of protection, care, authority, power, and honor as well as a responsibility to deliver God's message for the hour.
4. Every pastor is a watchman over the flock God has called him to be an under-shepherd to. Ezk. 3:17-21 and 33:2-9 gives almost the same warning twice to His "watchman" = one who peers in a distance and warns; one who keeps--guards; my what a responsibility! that is why Heb. 13:17 says to obey, submit, and follow these pastors. You say what if the pastor is wrong? You pray the problem will be straightened out. Remember I'm in His right hand and it is not hard nor does much time elapse before the grip tightens and He begins to squeeze and correct the problem.
5. "Out of his mouth" = refers to the words that proceed from His mouth. (Rev. 19:15)
6. "A sharp twoedged sword" = emblem of the Word of God and the power of truth (Heb. 4:12); the two edges were designed to cut both ways; thus, His words or His truth had the power of cutting deep or penetrating the soul; reveals two sides of God--a God of love and also a God of wrath and judgment.
7. The word is the word of life unto life to them that believe. It is also the word of death unto death to them that refuse. (John 3:16; Nahum 1:3)
8. "Countenance" = face.
9. "As the sun shineth in his strength" = this "his" refers to the sun; phrase means in his (sun) full splendor when not obscured by clouds; where his rays are in no way blocked.
10. This description of our Lord was not the same as it was on the mount of transfiguration, nor when He arose from the dead, nor when He ascended into heaven for John had not seen Him clothed with all this majesty and honor. Of His appearance in heaven we have no knowledge nor do we know exactly how He will look when He comes to judge man in Rev. 19. Also we do not know our own form and appearance after the resurrection. But we have a promise we will be like Him. (I John 3:2) And that is good enough for me!

V. 17

1. First and second "I" = "me" = John.
2. "Him" = "his" = "he" = third "I" = the Lord Jesus Christ.

3. "When" = as soon as.

4. "Saw him" = laid eyes upon Him.

5. "Fell at his feet as dead" = as if he were dead--deprived of sense and consciousness; his consciousness, his very life, seemed to ebb away as he looked upon the glorified, resurrected, reigning, and living Lord.

6. The Lord responded to John:

A. "Laid his right hand upon me" = as if to say "you are in my right hand;" the hand of favor and of power, supporting the weak, lifting up the fallen, giving strength to those who have no strength.

B. "Saying" = He spoke to John:

1) "Fear not" = do not be frightened; this is the same One who spoke to calm the disciples in fear in Mat. 14:27 when they saw Jesus walking on the water in the midst of a storm; the same One who calmed their fears on the Mount of Transfiguration when they heard the voice of God in Mat. 17:7.

2) "I am" = the self-existent One; these words alone were enough to startle a Jew for they knew the Scripture and knew that Jesus was saying He was the One who met Moses at the burning bush and told him to tell the Israelites that "I AM" had sent him to deliver them. (Exo. 3:13-14)

3) "The first and the last" = means He is eternal, which is one of the reasons he should not be afraid; I always live--had lived through the past, and will live through all which is to come.

V. 18

1. "I" = "he" = the Lord Jesus.

2. "*I am*" = implied from verse 17; see notes on verse 17.

3. "I am he that liveth, and was dead" = I was indeed once dead, but now I live, and shall continue to live for ever; speaks of the gospel--His redemptive work on the cross of Calvary and also of His resurrection.

4. "I am alive for evermore" = not only alive but always will be.

5. "Evermore" = ages of the ages; unbroken time; eternity.

6. "Amen" = truly; of a truth; so be it.

7. "Have" = to own; to possess; the tense is continuous action; therefore, there will never be a time our Lord ceases to possess these keys.

8. "Keys" = a symbol of authority, power, control, possession, and government.

9. "Hell" = the abode of the departed spirits in OT time; the region of the dead.

10. "Death" = separation of the soul and spirit from one's body; death has a gate so there is a key to lock and unlock it and Jesus has it; if it is not His will that a man die, neither fever, nor pestilence, nor earthquake, nor bomb, nor war, nor circumstance, nor providence, nor a 1000 angels could drag that man down to the grave or hurl his soul into the world that is yet to come; the only way through a locked gate is by a key or break in and I do not see a line waiting to break into death.

11. And our Lord has the keys and He is in control, thus, He says to John "fear not." Remember John was left on the Isle of Patmos to die but the One with the keys of death walks up and says, "Fear not I have the keys. We have a job to do, and I will not turn the key of death on you until I am ready and then I will go through the valley of death with you--fear not."

V. 19

1. In the Greek "therefore" is implied on account of the vision John had. (verses 10-18)

2. "Write" = to express in written characters upon parchment or other material; write three things:

A. "Things which thou hast seen" = refers to the vision John saw and heard while being in the Spirit on the Lord's day; this is recorded in Rev. 1:10-18.

B. "The things which are" = this includes verse 20 where the Lord identifies the stars as being the angels (messengers, pastors) of the seven churches (lampstands; candlesticks); also in Chapters 2-3 are seven messages given to seven real local churches in Asia that were under great persecution.

C. "The things which shall be hereafter" = this is prophetic and refers basically to Chapters 4-22 but also has an application to Chapters 2-3; these seven messages even though they were given to seven real churches are also prophetic in the sense that each message applies to a certain portion of the church age.

3. John was faithful to write what he saw and we can be blessed if we will heed the teachings of this book. (verse 3)

4. The time is at hand--closer than we think.

1. The things which are. Rev. 1:20-Rev. 3:22

V. 20

1. "The mystery" = hidden truth; not the idea of secrecy; simply signifies a truth which was once hidden but now is revealed, a truth which, without special revelation, would have been unknown. (I Cor. 2:9-11)
2. "The seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand" = these are the angels of the seven churches.
3. "Thou" = John.
4. "My" = the Lord Jesus Christ.
5. "Angels" = messengers; pastors of each of the seven churches who were responsible to deliver the message to the individual members of the church; this is what a faithful watchman will do.
6. "The seven golden candlesticks" = the seven churches listed by name in verse 11.
7. "Churches" = assemblies; a local visible body of baptized believers who meet together to glorify and worship the Lord.

CHAPTER 2:

A. The message to Ephesus. V. 1-7

V. 1

1. These messages to the churches in Chapters 2-3 have a three fold meaning:

A. Primary application. They are written to a specific church, having a local and direct bearing upon the church to which it was written. Each letter was a measuring rod by which each church could know its standing in the sight of the risen Lord.

B. Personal application. Every message can be applied in some way to our local church. Also every message applies to every individual Christian. For example: "He that hath an ear, let him hear." and "To him that overcometh"--phrases mentioned in all seven messages.

C. Prophetic application. Each message is a prophetic message as to the condition of the churches during that section of time in church history beginning with the church during Jesus' earthly ministry and ending at the rapture.

2. Prophetically, Ephesus represents the church age beginning with the beginning of the church during our Lord's ministry (I Cor. 12:28 = proof text) until about 160 AD.

3. "Angel" = messenger; the pastor who was responsible for delivering the message to the individual members; the Lord delivers His message to His pastors and they in turn, if they are faithful watchmen, pass the message on to the members of the church he pastors.

4. "Church" = ekklesia; a called out assembly of baptized believers who meet together to worship and glorify the Lord.

5. "Of Ephesus" = speaks of the church's geographical location; "of" means the same as "in" in verse 8; one important thing to note--none of these churches had a building to meet in; we do not know where they met--may have been in homes, or in a lean to--doesn't matter; the main thing is that they were saved people who met together and had a pastor and now the Lord sends them a specific message.

6. "Ephesus" = one of the chief cities of the province of Asia in the country of Turkey today; in the time of John, Ephesus had a large man-made harbor; also many roads led to Ephesus, therefore, it was a trade center; it was also the center of pagan worship and superstition; the temple of Diana of the Ephesians was located there and it was one of the seven wonders of the world; this temple was an asylum for anyone who committed a crime, for if he could reach the sanctuary of the temple of Diana, he was free from arrest, prosecution, and prison; there were temple prostitutes present in the temple and under the cloak of religion all manner of sex orgies were practiced; Ephesus was a wicked and sinful place and full of darkness; yet in the midst of all that, there was an assembly of believers.

7. "Write" = to express in written characters upon parchment or other material.

8. "These things" = refers to the things He is about to say to the church in Ephesus.

9. "He" = "his" = "who" = the Lord Jesus Christ who identifies Himself in this introductory message as:

A. "He that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand" = "holdeth" = is a strong word and means that Jesus Christ has complete control over those He holds in His right hand; the tense in the Greek is continuous action--our Lord never lets us go; the "stars" are the pastors and since we are in His right hand (place of protection and authority) He can squeeze quickly or tighten His grip; if the messenger (angel) submits to that control of Christ, he will never go wrong.

B. "Who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks" = this expression tells us of Christ's unwearied activity in the midst of His churches; the tense in the Greek reveals a continuous, habitual lifestyle; He is not confined to just one but He is in all of them--churches that are His--true churches (Mat. 18:20); this is a sobering thought; He is listening to every conversation; He takes notice of our conduct; He sees our careless walk; nothing escapes that all seeing eye of our Lord--He is in the midst.

V. 2

1. "I" = the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. "Know" = to have absolute knowledge of the facts; the phrase is spoken to all seven churches and speaks of the Lord's absolute knowledge of the condition and circumstances of His people.
3. "Thy" = "thou" = the church of Ephesus; applies to all saints.
4. "Works" = acts; deeds; things done; this church was an active, energetic, and living church--a fruitful people for their works proved their faith. (James 2:20)
5. "Labour" = laboring to the point of sweat; to toil or labor to the point of exhaustion; the kind of toil which takes everything of mind, strength, time, and treasure; it took something out of them; "labour" is a stronger word than "work."
6. "Patience" = steadfastness; consistency; endurance; the quality of an individual that does not surrender to circumstances or succumb to trials; no matter how the Ephesian Christians were beaten down, discouraged, or persecuted, they did not quit.
7. "How thou canst not bear them which are evil" = this reveals that the church had spiritual discernment and practiced discipline; they did not put up with or allow evil ones to come in the church as members.
8. "Evil" = of a bad nature; absence of the qualities which a person claims to have--hypocrite; wolf in sheep's clothing; John the Baptist did not either (Mat. 3:8); this church was not concerned with the quantity of persons that were added but with the quality.
9. "Thou has tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars" = the church tested and found they did not meet the qualification of an apostle who was to be a witness of the Lord's resurrection (Acts 1:21-22); when they did not meet this qualification they labeled them what they were--liars; Paul called them what they were in II Cor. 11:13. (I Tim. 6:3-5)
10. The Lord commended this church for possessing these qualities as well as those mentioned in the next verse.

V. 3

1. "Hast borne" = have endured the toil, sacrifice, and persecution; they did not abandon the principles of truth nor yield to error.
2. "Hast patience" = have shown that they could bear up under the things they faced with patience; this is almost a repetition of verse 2.

3. "And for my name's sake hast laboured" = for the cause of Christ they laboured--advanced the cause of the Redeemer; again a repetition of verse 2, yet added the reason they laboured--for my name's sake.

4. "Hast not fainted" = they did not become exhausted or wearied, so as to give over (Gal. 6:9); there was no thought of giving up or giving over to the conflict with evil.

5. All the Lord says about this church to this point is commendation. This church seems to be head and shoulders taller than any around today. But the Lord announces that He has something against them.

V. 4

1. "Nevertheless" = notwithstanding; but; shows a contrast.

2. "I" = the Lord Jesus Christ.

3. "Thee" = "thy" = the people of the church of Ephesus.

4. "I have *somewhat* against thee" = there are some things which I cannot approve.

5. "Thou hast left thy first love" = they had not lost it but left it; their love was less glowing and fervent than it was at first; though they still maintained the doctrines of the Lord's truths and opposed the advocates of error, they showed less affection toward Him directly than they had formerly done.

6. "Love" = agape; God kind of love; love in action; context refers to the saint's love for Christ being expressed less than when they were first saved.

7. They maintained a spirit of sacrifice, steadfastness, separation, and a keenness for detecting heresy, but they were guilty of sin that no average person could detect. Jesus told the disciples what it would be like in the last days. (Mat. 24:12)

V. 5

1. "Therefore" = in view of the fact that you have left your first love.

2. "Remember" = to be mindful of; to call to mind; to make mention of; remember when:

A. You loved to be in the Lord's house right after you were saved.

B. You loved to be around His people.

C. You loved to sing the songs of Zion.

3. This is not contradictory to what Paul said in Phil. 3:13--"forgetting those things that are behind" = there are some things in the past you need to forget. Even though you cannot forget like the Lord does, you must not let some things in the past influence you wrongly. But there are some things in the past you need to call to mind because they are good and right to continue in your life.

4. "Whence" = where.

5. "Thou" = "thee" = "thy" = the saints in the church of Ephesus.

6. "Fallen" = refers to leaving your first love.

7. Our number one priority is loving Him and when we do that all other things will fall in place. When you love Him rightly, you will take time for Him.

8. "Repent" = to change one's mind for the better with abhorrence of one's past sins; regret accompanied by a true change of heart; change of mind, attitude, and heart; a turning from sin, self, and the world to take up sides with God against self; repent is a verb--man's part and one can not act to repent until repentance (God's part) is worked and that is only by godly sorrow (II Cor. 7:10); this is true of the saint and sinner.

9. The prodigal son, who was lost in the context of Luke 15, came to himself when he remembered how good it was under Dad's authority, watch, care, and protection and his action was one of repenting (Luke 15:18)--no excuses, no blaming others but "I have sinned."

10. "Do the first works" = means to manifest the zeal and love you had when first saved.

11. "Or else" = otherwise; but if not; an ultimatum.

12. "I" = the Lord Jesus Christ.

13. "I will come unto thee quickly and will remove thy candlestick out of his place" = I will come with speed and destroy your testimony, influence, and effectiveness in the eyes of those around you.

14. The candlestick supports and bears up the light for all to see. Jesus is the light, but if the church has lost her candlestick, then it becomes ineffective in lifting up Jesus to a lost and dying world and the Holy Spirit no longer would empower the message causing the services to become mechanical, routine, ritualistic, dull, and dead.

15. Someone has said that 95% of the activity in the average local church would go on as it is presently, even if the Holy Spirit did not exist. I'm inclined to agree.

V. 6

1. "But" = reveals contrast; our Lord used what is called sandwich psychology which is positive, negative, positive instruction.
2. "Thou" = the saints in the church at Ephesus.
3. "I" = the Lord Jesus Christ.
4. "Hatest" = "hate" = to detest; to dislike greatly; implies righteous indignation. (Eph. 4:26)
6. "This" = "deed" = works; actions; notice Jesus and the people hated the works of the Nicolaitanes and not the people themselves.
7. "Nicolaitanes" = we do not know what or who they are; there is no ancient mention of a sect called the Nicolaitanes; what were deeds in Ephesus became doctrine in Pergamos (verse 15); some believe it is the same Greek name for the Hebrew word Balaam but scripture mentions both the doctrine of Balaam and Nicolaitanes along with the word "also" = Rev. 2:14-15; they may have been similar but they are two different groups; the word comes from two Greek words which means "to conquer the people;" I think it best describes the forerunners of the Roman Catholic church; Websters says it was one of the sects in the ancient Christian church, so named from Nicolas, a deacon of the church of Jerusalem, who held that all married women should be common to prevent jealousy, thus they were charged with licentious practices.
8. Whatever the deeds of the Nicolaitanes were, Christ said He hated them and commended the saints in Ephesus for hating them also.

V. 7

1. "He" = "him" = refers to anyone who reads this message to Ephesus, whether they were a member of Ephesus or not; applies to us today since the message is narrowed down to individuals at this point.
 2. "He that hath an ear" = this is referring to a spiritual ear not the physical ear; refers to the saved in context because of the promise mentioned; if you have been awakened, the Lord gives you an ear to hear; this phrase is mentioned in the message to all seven of the Churches; Jesus used this phrase during his earthly ministry and it is recorded eight times in the Bible, one of which is Mat. 13:9; you are blessed if you have an ear to hear.
 3. "Let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches:"
- A. "Hear" = to understand; to perceive the sense of what is said.

B. "The Spirit" = the Holy Spirit who is the teacher of the churches; He is regarded in the Scripture as the source of inspiration.

C. This phrase is used in the message to all the seven churches.

4. These two phrases together could call for self examination, therefore, it is narrowed down to individuals since every man has to give an account of himself in the judgment. (Rom. 14:11-12) Do you have an ear? Are you saved or have you been awakened? Examine yourself.

5. "Overcometh" = means to gain the victory; to be a conqueror; the tense is a continuous habitual lifestyle; we usually think that this is referring to some supernatural spiritual person but the Bible makes it clear that this is simply one who has been saved (I John 5:4-5; Note: "believeth" is continuous action which indicates saving faith which never fails in a person after it is exercised); this phrase is also spoken in the message of all seven churches with different privileges added.

6. "I" = the Lord Jesus Christ.

7. "Give" = to supply; furnish.

8. "Give to eat of the tree of life" = a privilege that all who are saved have; the tree of life was first mentioned in Gen. 2:9 as being in the midst of the garden of Eden; when Adam sinned he was placed outside the garden and God put cherubims at the entrance of the garden and a flaming sword which turned every way to keep man from eating of the tree of life. (Gen. 3:24)

9. "Which is in the midst of the paradise of God" = since the tree of life was in the midst of the garden of Eden, causes us to ask, "What and where is the paradise of God?"

A. "What" = the resting place of departed saints.

B. "Where" = in OT time it was in the heart of the earth, also referred to as Abraham's bosom, where Jesus went three days and nights with the thief He saved on the cross; (Luke 23:43; Mat. 12:40); when our Lord resurrected He emptied Paradise in the heart of the earth, led captivity captive (Eph. 4:8), and carried the saints of God into the third heaven where Paradise is today. (II Cor. 12:1-4)

B. The message to Smyrna. V. 8-11

V. 8

1. "Angel" = messenger; the pastor who was responsible for delivering the message to the individual members; the Lord delivers His message to His pastors and they in turn, if they are faithful watchmen, pass the message on to the members of the church he pastors.

2. "Church" = ekklesia; a called out assembly of baptized believers who meet together to worship and glorify the Lord.

3. "In" = speaks of the church's geographical location.

4. "Smyrna" = means myrrh, which had to do with embalming, suffering, and death; some facts:

A. A city located 40-50 miles N of Ephesus on the Aegean Sea; same as modern day Ismar, Turkey.

B. A city that yielded total loyalty to Rome.

C. Several pagan temples were built there.

D. It was said that in Smyrna there dwelt the splendor of heathen culture at its highest and pagan religion at its most magnificent.

E. The Jews were numerous and influential and did everything they could to damage the cause of Christ and persuade the Roman authorities to active persecution, therefore, the people were especially hostile to Christians.

F. It was no easy thing to live for Christ in this city yet right in the middle of Smyrna was one of Christ's churches.

G. Since its name means myrrh, it will help us understand what this church faced if we knew some facts about myrrh:

1) It is bitter to taste but gives off a fragrant and pleasant odor.

2) The only way for myrrh to give off its fragrance is to crush its leaves.

3) It was one of the gifts brought by the wise men to Jesus 18-20 months after His birth. That gift pointed directly to Calvary and His bitter sufferings on the cross.

4) In John 19:39, it was Nicodemus who brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight, to anoint the body of Jesus for burial.

5) In Mark 15:23 myrrh was mixed with the vinegar and offered to our Redeemer while He was upon the cross.

6) Therefore, in Smyrna in the midst of bitter sorrow and suffering, it is fitting that one of the Lord's churches was being crushed and a sweet fragrance ascended up to God for He had only good to say of this church.

H. Prophetically this church represents the time in church history from approximately 160 AD to 313 AD. During this time of church history, the church was persecuted beneath the iron heel of pagan Rome. It was to this most afflicted and persecuted of all the churches that the Lord told John to write.

5. "Write" = to express in written characters upon parchment or other material.

6. "These things" = refers to the things He is about to say to the church in Smyrna.

7. The Lord identified Himself to Smyrna as:

A. "The first and the last" = the same identification revealed to John in Rev. 1:17; this reveals Him as the Great Conqueror, the Eternal One, the Everlasting Victorious Christ; this peculiar description of the Lord should bring rich comfort and assurance to the heart of the believers in Smyrna and produce great courage in their actions; it would fortify the faith of those who were compelled to pass through such grievous persecution; the great I AM was speaking to the persecuted church and is saying I'm with you.

B. "Which was dead, and is alive" = He revealed Himself to John in Rev. 1:18 using this description:

1) "Was" = means became; it describes what we might call "the experience of an episode" = Christ became dead; for Him it was a passing phase which He passed through--something which He experienced and overcame.

2) "Is alive" = describes the action done and completed in the past; means He came to life again; the Lord Jesus is He who experienced death, who passed through death, and who came out of death into life again in the triumphant event of the Resurrection and who is alive forever more.

8. This is how the Lord revealed Himself to the suffering and persecuted church of Smyrna.

V. 9

1. "I" = the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. "Thy" = "thou" = the church of Smyrna; applies to all saints.

3. "Know" = to have absolute knowledge of the facts; speaks of the Lord's absolute knowledge of the condition and circumstances of His people.

4. "Works" = acts; deeds; things done; this church was an active, energetic, and living church; their works proved their faith because Jesus did not have one thing to say against them. (James 2:20)

5. "Tribulation" = pressure; between a rock and a hard place; this is from a strong Greek word which indicates the execution of a man by placing a heavy boulder upon him and the weight of the boulder gradually crushes him to death; word has the picture of grinding millstones, the pressure of which grinds the wheat into flour; the pressure of persecution, sorrow, and death.

6. The Lord says, "I know about what you are going through and I understand." How could He? Because He had been that way before. (Heb. 4:15)

7. "Poverty" = there are two words in the Greek that are translated poverty; one means the man who just barely makes a living; he just gets by; his standard of living is very low and he is forced to work for a living; the second word means beggary; absolute and utter destitution; means not to have anything--this is the word used here; the Christians were poor to begin with but when they identified with Christ all Smyrna turned against them; they were deprived of the right to work and make a living; they had no social prestige, no trade union would have them, no business would hire them, they were boycotted on every hand, and they had lost their homes, work, and possessions and lived in beggary.

8. Jesus knew their poverty and understood. Early in His ministry He stated Mat. 8:20. He understood and they were comforted by His words.

9. "(But thou art rich)" = abounding in Christian virtue and eternal possessions; rich in so great salvation; rich in blessed fellowship one with another; rich in their heavenly fellowship with the Almighty; rich in the hope of the glory to come; the Christian who is laying up treasure in heaven is rich indeed. (Mat. 6:19-21; Luke 12:15; Heb. 10:34)

10. It is interesting to note that the Laodicean church was free of persecution and it is called the "rich poor" church but Smyrna was called the "poor rich" church.

11. "Blasphemy" = injurious speech; slander; means slander of the worst type; this was brought about by those in Smyrna against the Christians; they had everything told on them that could be told and it was done by religious groups "which say they are Jews" = these may have been of Jewish descendants but Christ said they "are not"--not what a real Jew stands for; in fact He labeled them of "the synagogue of Satan" = of the assembly of the evil one--wolves in sheep's clothing; a religious crowd not having truth.

V. 10

1. Look at the words of encouragement the Lord gives this suffering church.

2. "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer" = do not be afraid of the things you will have to endure in the future; one might expect Him to say: 1) "Fear not, for the days of suffering will soon be past," or 2) "Fear not for I will destroy those who persecute you and I will bring you out shortly;" but instead He said, "You are to have more of the same--more trials, more suffering, more trouble, but fear not."

3. "Thou" = "you" = "ye" = "thee" = the church of Smyrna; applies to all saints.

4. Then the Lord list some of the suffering they were to face:

A. "The devil shall cast *some* of you into prison, that you may be tried:"

1) The devil is behind all persecution. (I Peter 5:8)

2) The devil wants to destroy you in hell, if he can; therefore, he comes as a angel of light to deceive (II Cor. 11:14), to lead astray, to blind (II Cor. 4:3-4), and to give a counterfeit experience making you think it is from God; if this is the case you will wind up in hell.

3) After you are saved he wants to destroy your testimony so others will see that and stumble over you into hell.

4) The power of the devil is limited and controlled, and he cannot put forth his hand and touch even the feeblest lamb of the flock without permission from God. (Psa. 62:11) Job is a good example. (Job 1:7-12)

5) "Tried" = to allow evils to come upon one in order to prove his character and the steadfastness of his faith. (I Peter 1:6-7)

6) This you are going to face but fear not!

B. "And ye shall have tribulation ten days:"

1) "Tribulation" = grievous affliction, pressure, or distress; speaks of persecution; all saints will suffer. (II Tim. 3:12; Acts 14:22)

2) "Ten days" = the number 10 is the Bible number of perfection or completeness in divine order; it also means testimony; the 10 days does not mean a 24 hour day but it means:

a. That the tribulation will be for a limited amount of time, set, and ordered in God's divine order.

b. Prophetically it could mean:

a) The 10 different pagan, ungodly Roman rulers' reign during which they had multitudes of Christians killed for their faith. The last reign ended in 313 AD. During this time hundreds of Christians were brought into the amphitheaters of Rome to be fed to hungry lions while thousands cheered. Many were crucified. Others were covered with animal skins and tortured to death by wild dogs. Others were covered with tar and set on fire to serve as lamp post. Others were boiled in oil and burned at the stakes. It was said that during this period of time at least five million Christians were martyred for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

b) The 10 year reign of Diocletian (Di-o-cleation) who was the last one of the persecuting rulers to reign and he was the worst of all. He even attempted to destroy the Bible from the face of the earth. The reason he was the last ruler to persecute the Christians so great was because the Devil changed his tactics. Under the iron hand of Rome, the saint's blood flowed and the church grew because she was purified and her testimony was sealed with blood--much blood. So about 313 AD Constantine, also a pagan Roman ruler, came on the scene and instead of persecuting he diluted the church

and had his army baptized and called Christian. This was the beginning of the Roman Catholic church.

c. Whatever these 10 days are it means it is a fixed time and God is in control. Fear not!

5. "Be thou faithful unto death:"

A. "Faithful" = means to be trusted; reliable; dependable; having or showing a strong sense of duty or responsibility; this word is from a root word which means to be convinced; in Rev. 1:5 Christ is said to be faithful; therefore, the faithfulness of the saints rests in the faithfulness of the Saviour; Christ was not telling His suffering saints to "keep a stiff upper lip" or to "keep your chin up" or "grin and bear it;" what He told them was to depend on Him, to be convinced of Him, and to let Him be their strength and courage; He knew they would fail if they merely tried to bear up in their own strength; Luke speaks of something similar to this just before Jesus comes back. (Luke 21:8-18, 25-28)

B. "Unto death" = not "until" death for this could be due to a natural cause, but "unto" death asking them to die a martyr's death--remain faithful until death relieved them of their suffering.

6. "And I will give thee a crown of life" = this is speaking of a special reward for faithful martyrs which will be given by our Lord at the Judgment seat of Christ; these crowns will be the saints wedding gifts to the Lord at the marriage supper when they cast them before the throne. (Rev. 4:10)

7. The Lord did not call us to be a success by world standards but faithful. (I Cor. 4:2) Polycarp is a famous example of this verse:

A. He was said to be pastor of this church at the time of this writing.

B. He was later brought by a mob before the governor because they hated him.

C. He was given a choice of saying "Jesus is Lord" or "Caesar is Lord." He refused to say "Caesar is Lord." The governor urged him saying, "Swear! I will set thee at liberty. Reproach Christ."

D. He answered back, "Eighty and six years have I served Him and He never did me harm. How then can I blaspheme my King and my Saviour?"

E. When the governor again pressed him, the aged pastor answered, "Since thou art vainly urging that I should swear by the fortune of Caesar and pretendest not to know who and what I am, hear me, I am a Christian!"

F. A little later the governor threatened, "I have wild beasts at hand. To them will I cast thee except thou change." Later he said, "I will cause thee to be consumed by fire, seeing thou despisest the wild beast, if thou wilt not change."

G. Polycarp said, "Thou threatenest me with fire which burneth for an hour, and after a little is extinguished. But thou art ignorant of the fire of the coming judgment and of eternal punishment reserved for the ungodly. But why tarriest thou? Bring forth what thou wilt."

H. Soon after the people, led by the Jews (on a Sabbath day, in contradiction to their law) gathered wood and sticks and burned the faithful pastor. In the flames Polycarp prayed this moving prayer. "I thank thee that thou hast graciously thought me worthy of this day and of this hour, that I may receive a portion in the number of martyrs in the cup of Christ." And so the pastor died--faithful unto death.

8. Fear none of these things. Be faithful!

V. 11

1. "He" = "him" = refers to anyone who reads this message to Smyrna, whether they were a member of Smyrna or not; applies to us today since the message is narrowed down to individuals at this point.

2. "He that hath an ear" = this is referring to a spiritual ear not the physical ear; refers to the saved in context because of the promise mentioned; if you have been awakened, the Lord gives you an ear to hear; this phrase is mentioned in the message to all seven of the Churches; Jesus used this phrase during his earthly ministry and it is recorded eight times in the Bible one of which is Mat. 13:9; you are blessed if you have an ear to hear.

3. "Let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches:"

A. "Hear" = to understand; to perceive the sense of what is said; implies to heed--obey.

B. "The Spirit" = the Holy Spirit who is the teacher of the churches; He is regarded in the Scripture as the source of inspiration.

C. This phrase is used in the message to all the seven churches.

4. These two phrases together could call for self examination, therefore, it is narrowed down to individuals since every man has to give an account of himself in the judgment. (Rom. 14:11-12) If the first church had a lost member with the master Teacher present, what about the rest? Do you have an ear? Are you saved or have you been awakened? Examine yourself.

5. "Overcometh" = means to gain the victory; to be a conqueror; the tense is a continuous habitual lifestyle; we usually think that this is referring to some supernatural spiritual person but the Bible makes it clear that this is simply one who has been saved (I John 5:4-5; Note: "believeth" is continuous action which indicates saving faith which never fails in a person after it is exercised); this phrase is also spoken in the message of all seven churches with different privileges added.

6. "Shall not be hurt of the second death" = the privilege of being an overcomer:

A. "Death" = means separation; physical death is separation of soul and spirit from the body; spiritual death, which is the second death, is separation of spirit, soul, and body from God which is hell and then the lake of fire.

B. "Shall not be hurt" = a promise of a privilege to the saved--they have nothing to fear in the future world--no wrath, no hell. (Rev. 20:6; I Thess. 1:9-10; 5:9)

C. The message to Pergamos. V. 12-17

V. 12

1. "Angel" = messenger; the pastor who was responsible for delivering the message to the individual members; the Lord delivers His message to His pastors and they in turn, if they are faithful watchmen, pass the message on to the members of the church he pastors.

2. "Church" = ekklesia; a called out assembly of baptized believers who meet together to worship and glorify the Lord.

3. "In Pergamos " = speaks of the church's geographical location; "in" means the same as "of" in verse 1; one important thing to note--none of these churches had a building to meet in; we do not know where they met--may have been in homes, or in a lean to--doesn't matter; the main thing is that they were saved people who met together and had a pastor and now the Lord sends them a specific message.

4. "Pergamos" = means "a tower" or "a marriage"--this will show forth something of great importance later; some facts about the city:

A. Located in area known as Turkey today, 60 miles North of Smyrna and about 15 miles inland from the Aegean Sea. It was built on a tall cone shaped hill and from the top the sea could be seen.

B. Historically, it was a famous city in Asia. It had been a capital city for 400 years. Started right after the fall of Alexander the Great and it even kept the distinction of being a capital city of a Roman province.

C. They had one of the most famous libraries in the world with over 200,000 volumes written on parchment. Parchment came from the skins of animals and was invented in Pergamos and got its name from Pergamos. Papyrus was used for writing before parchment. It came from bulrushes that grew along the Nile River in Egypt. Because of a conflict between the king of Egypt and the king of the country where Pergamos was located, Egypt would not ship any papyrus to Pergamos. So that forced them into the discovery and the perfection of writing material made out of skins of animals. Today if you graduate from college they call your diploma a "sheepskin." That refers to the material on which the diplomas used to be written on and it dates back to Pergamos.

D. Pergamos was one of the great religious centers in the ancient world. They had famous shrines and temples, one of which was erected to the god (little "g") of Zeus. Another temple was also built to a god of healing. His emblem was a serpent--serpents are an emblem of the medical profession today. The city had the most famous medical school in the world in this temple. In the courts, harmless snakes slithered on the floor and sufferers came from the ends of the earth to sleep in the sanctuary. If a sufferer happened to be touched by one of those sliding, slithering snakes in the night, he was touched by the healing presence of this god of healing. Much of what they called medicine, we call superstition or demons.

E. Right in the midst of all of this heathen worship, idolatry, sin, and ungodliness, one of the Lord's churches existed.

F. Prophetically this church represents the time in church history from approximately 313 AD to 600 AD.

5. "Write" = to express in written characters upon parchment or other material.

6. "These things" = refers to the things He is about to say to the church in Pergamos.

7. "He" = the Lord Jesus Christ who identifies Himself in this introductory message as "he which hath the sharp sword with two edges."

A. "Which" = who; the Lord is a person and not a thing; therefore, this is masculine gender and not neuter.

B. "Sharp sword with two edges" = refers to the word of God (Heb. 4:12); speaks of the judgment of God--judges thoughts and intents of heart and mind and divides the soul from the spirit so man will recognize he is lost; in context He is writing to saints properly identifying Himself as the one who will judge those who slip in the church bringing in false doctrines. (verse 15)

V. 13

1. "I" = the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. "Know" = to have absolute knowledge of the facts; the phrase is spoken to all seven churches and speaks of the Lord's absolute knowledge of the condition and circumstances of His people.

3. "Thy" = "thou" = the church of Pergamos; applies to all saints.

4. "Works" = acts; deeds; things done; this church was an active, energetic, and living church--a fruitful people for their works proved their faith. (James 2:20)

5. "Where thou dwellest" = to have one's permanent resident as far as the world is concerned; where they live; He knew what they were going through; sometimes we

think God does not know where we live but He does; some say "it is hard to be a Christian in this world" but Titus 2:11-12 says grace will teach you what to deny and how to live in this present world; I Peter 2:11 refers to saints as strangers (one not at home) and pilgrims (one headed home) in this world.

6. "Where Satan's seat *is*" = "seat" means throne or seat of power; in Pergamos Satan's rule was the strongest--the place where he exercised the most authority; the base of operation; on the cone shaped hill, on a jutting ledge there was built the most extravagantly decorated, the largest and most famous altar in the world--the altar of Zeus which was 90 feet square and 40 ft. high; this altar of sacrifice to Zeus was the most impressive thing in the city; it looked somewhat like a throne, thus Satan's base of operation where he exercised power and great authority; most think his throne is in hell but in this present day his throne still exists, even though the altar of Zeus is destroyed; he is referred to as "god of this world" in II Cor. 4:3-4 and as "the prince of the power of the air" in Eph. 2:2.

7. "Thou holdest fast my name" = God; His name stands for Himself; it represents the fullness of His divine Person, His diety, His sinlessness, and His saving work for sinners; it suggests His honor, His glorious nature, His holy character, and His redeeming power; it means they maintained a love for and loyalty to Christ's name and He commended them for doing so; they could have said "Ceasar is Lord" but no, they, like Polycarp, were not ashamed that they were a Christian; it would have been easier to identify with Satan, since this was where his seat was, but they held fast to the Lord's name; holding fast is not the equivalent of carrying a card or having a bumper sticker, or wearing a medal to show that one belongs to some "holy name society;" instead it is holding to the firm conviction that He is the Lord Jesus Christ.

8. "Hast not denied my faith" = this is the same as "the faith" that Jude wrote about in Jude 3; stands for the whole revealed truth--the body of the true doctrine--once delivered to the saints; they had not rejected the faith but stood for it even in a time when great persecution had burst out against the Christians = "even in those days."

9. "Wherein" = when.

10. "Antipas" = this is the only time his name is mentioned in the Bible; secular historians made no mention of him but Christ took note and He always will. (Psa. 116:15)

11. "My" = signifies him as one of Christ's own; belonging to Him; ownership; bought with a price. (I Cor. 6:19-20)

12. "Martyr" = witness; described as "faithful" = trustworthy; one that can be relied on; Rev. 1:5 states the same words in the Greek about the Lord Himself; Jesus gave Antipas a great tribute by giving him the same title as He gave Himself.

13. "Who was slain" = he was killed--martyred; sealed his testimony for Christ with his own blood.

14. "Among you" = at Pergamos "where Satan dwelleth" = where Satan's seat is; mentioned twice to let the saints at Pergamos know the Lord really did understand what they were going through.

15. The Lord commended them for their stand. How could they stand at a time like that? They experienced something real when they met Jesus. They were more than "professors" they were "possessors." They were not tares but wheat. They had been put in the church by the Spirit, not by self or the preacher. Therefore, they were able to stand even if it meant sealing their testimony with their own blood. What a testimony!

V. 14

1. "But" = reveals contrast between the Lord's commendation of verse 13 and that which He has against the church in this verse.

2. "I" = the Lord Jesus Christ.

3. "Thee" = "thou" = the church of Pergamos; applies to all saints if they are guilty of this accusation.

4. "Few things" = plural; more than one, in fact as we analyze the text He brings up two things against them.

5. "Because" = introduces the reason He had a few things against the church.

6. "There" = in that place; in the church--these He speaks of were members of the church; they did not just attend the church = "them."

7. "Hold" = to keep carefully and faithfully; to embrace; means to believe and promote in context.

8. "Doctrine of Balaam" = the teaching of Balaam which is listed in the rest of this verse.

6. "Balaam" = "who" = a false prophet Balac, king of Moab, hired to curse the children of Israel so the glory of God would depart from them; the story of Balaam can be read in Numbers Chapters 22-25; he was not an Israelite but of Mesopotamia which is Iraq today. (Deut. 23:4)

7. "Who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel:"

A. "Taught" = to impart instruction; introduced a plan that would cause God to take the glory off the children of Israel.

B. "Stumblingblock" = means anything over which anyone may fall into sin; Balaam's plan to Balac was to let their daughters walk scantily-clad through the camp and the young men will desire them and sin and God will take the glory off.

C. "The children of Israel" = the tribes of Israel who wandered in the wilderness for 40 years.

8. "To eat things sacrificed to idols" = this was forbidden by law; the Moabites and Midianites were pagan idol worshipers and had feasts where meat was eaten that was sacrificed to idols; evidently Balaam taught it was alright to do such a thing; it seems there were teachers in Pergamos that had persuaded the professing Christians to attend some pagan feast.

9. "To commit fornication" = to prostitute one's body to the lust of another; any sex relations without proper marriage; also it can speak of spiritual fornication--joining to the world; remember Pergamos means marriage--the joining of the church to the world.

10. The doctrine of Balaam was his teaching Balac to corrupt the people who could not be cursed, by tempting them to yoke up with the women of Moab and Midian and defile their separation by eating meat sacrificed to idols and abandoning their pilgrim character by yoking up with the world. Those in the church may not have taught the exact same doctrine which Balaam did but substantially the same; therefore, they deserved to be classified with him.

V. 15

1. "So" = in like manner.

2. "Thou" = the church in Pergamos.

3. "Also" = indeed; likewise.

4. "Them" = members of the church who held this doctrine.

5. "Hold" = embrace; to keep carefully and faithfully; means to believe and promote.

6. "Doctrine of the Nicolaitanes" = "which thing" = we do not know what or who they are; there is no ancient mention of a sect called the Nicolaitanes; what were deeds in Ephesus (verse 6) became doctrine in Pergamos; some believe it is the same Greek name for the Hebrew word Balaam but scripture mentions both the doctrine of Balaam and Nicolaitanes along with the word "also;" they may have been similar but they are two different groups; the word comes from two Greek words which means "to conquer the people;" I think it best describes the forerunners of the Roman Catholic church; Webster's says it was one of the sects in the ancient Christian church, so named from Nicolas, a deacon of the church of Jerusalem, who held that all married women should be common to prevent jealousy, thus they were charged with licentious practices.

7. Prophetically this shows the deterioration of the church which at the beginning hated even the deeds of the Nicolaitanes but by the fourth century there were those in the church who had embraced the doctrine (teaching).

8. "I" = the Lord Jesus Christ.

9. "Hate" = to detest; to dislike greatly; implies righteous indignation. (Eph. 4:26)

V. 16

1. "Repent" = to change one's mind for the better with abhorrence of one's past sins; regret accompanied by a true change of heart; change of mind, attitude, and heart; a turning from sin, self, and the world to take up sides with God against self; repent is a verb--man's part and one can not act to repent until repentance (God's part) is worked and that is only by godly sorrow (II Cor. 7:10); this is true of the saint and sinner; this implies the church must practice church discipline. (II Thess. 3:6)

2. "Or else" = otherwise.

3. "I" = "my" = the Lord Jesus Christ.

4. "I will come unto thee quickly" = means He would come against them in judgment or to punish them.

5. "And will fight against them with the sword of my mouth" = refers to fighting against the Nicolaitanes but He would also come against the church for tolerating them; He would give an order and they would be cut as if by a sword identified with two edges in verse 12; He does not say precisely in what way it would be done--might be by persecution or by heavy judgments; to see the force of this we need to remember the power which Christ has to punish the wicked by a word of His mouth. (Rev. 19:15)

6. We do not want people against our church, but we for sure do not want the Lord against our church.

7. Pergamos did not repent and she is non-existent today. As for the prophetic church age is concerned, she has grown colder and more lax in her repentance until the one world church is having a heyday.

V. 17

1. "He" = "him" = refers to anyone who reads this message to Pergamos, whether they were a member of Pergamos or not; applies to us today since the message is narrowed down to individuals at this point.

2. "He that hath an ear" = this is referring to a spiritual ear not the physical ear; refers to the saved in context because of the promise mentioned; if you have been awakened, the Lord gives you an ear to hear; this phrase is mentioned in the message to all seven of the Churches; Jesus used this phrase during his earthly ministry and it is recorded

eight times in the Bible one of which is Mat. 13:9; you are blessed if you have an ear to hear.

3. "Let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches:"

A. "Hear" = to understand; to perceive the sense of what is said.

B. "The Spirit" = the Holy Spirit who is the teacher of the churches; He is regarded in the Scripture as the source of inspiration.

C. This phrase is used in the message to all the seven churches.

4. These two phrases together could call for self examination, therefore, it is narrowed down to individuals since every man has to give an account of himself in the judgment. (Rom. 14:11-12) Do you have an ear? Are you saved or have you been awakened? Examine yourself.

5. "Overcometh" = means to gain the victory; to be a conqueror; the tense is a continuous habitual lifestyle; we usually think that this is referring to some supernatural spiritual person but the Bible makes it clear that this is simply one who has been saved (I John 5:4-5; Note: "believeth" is continuous action which indicates saving faith which never fails in a person after it is exercised); this phrase is also spoken in the message of all seven churches with different privileges added.

6. "I" = the Lord Jesus Christ.

7. "Give" = to supply; furnish.

8. "Give to eat of the hidden manna" = a privilege that all who are saved have; this is true spiritual food; the food that nourishes the soul; "manna" means, what is it? The first mention of "manna" was Exo. 16:15 and it speaks of God's provision for them as they journeyed through the wilderness; it is a type of the Lord Jesus who is the bread from heaven; here it is described as hidden while in OT it was not hidden; in Pergamos the saints were able to survive the persecutions because they partook daily of Christ who was The Manna and was hidden from the view of those who rejected Him; the believer has meat to eat that the world knows not of; he can feed upon Him who alone can satisfy.

9. "And will give him a white stone" = this is a second privilege mentioned in this message to Pergamos that all the saved have; during the time in which John wrote this book a white stone was used in social life and judicial customs; days of great festivals were noted by a white stone while days of great calamity were noted by a black stone; if a host had a special guest whom he greatly appreciated, the guest was given a white stone with a name or a message written on it, directed only to the guest and not to be shared by any other; in the courts, a white stone meant acquittal while a black stone meant condemnation; by the Lord's promise to give all the saved a white stone it means victory and final acquittal; this will be future at the Judgment seat of Christ.

10. "And in the stone a new name written" = this name indicates a new relation, new hopes and triumphs; Abraham, Sarah, Jacob, and Peter received new names after they were saved.

11. "Which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it" = what the new name is I do not know; in fact, the only one who knows it will be the individual who receives it and then only when he receives it; to say what it is would have to be speculation; it does suggest to us that in heaven each redeemed person will have his own personal and intimate knowledge of his Lord; each one will enjoy an intimacy with his Lord that no other can share (I Cor. 13:12); I will know what my white stone says because it will be personal to me and the same holds true of all who are saved.

12. Seven times the Lord speaks to the overcomers and promises them various privileges. Why? To cause them to desire the Lord to come and fall more in love with Him till He does. These repetitions to the churches should encourage us to keep on keeping on till He comes.

D. The message to Thyatira. V. 18-29

V. 18

1. "Angel" = messenger; the pastor who was responsible for delivering the message to the individual members; the Lord delivers His message to His pastors and they in turn, if they are faithful watchmen, pass the message on to the members of the church he pastors.

2. "Church" = ekklesia; a called out assembly of baptized believers who meet together to worship and glorify the Lord.

3. "In Thyatira" = speaks of the church's geographical location; "in" means the same as "of" in verse 1; one important thing to note--none of these churches had a building to meet in; we do not know where they met--may have been in homes, or in a lean to--doesn't matter; the main thing is that they were saved people who met together and had a pastor and now the Lord sends them a specific message.

4. "Thyatira" = some facts about:

A. Located about 40 miles east-SE of Pergamos.

B. The town is the smallest and less significant than the first three but received the longest letter.

C. It was distinguished for its industrial activity; therefore, it was a prosperous city in trade and commerce.

D. It was a well known center for numerous trade guilds, similar to labor unions as we know them today. There were organized groups and associations for potters, tanners, bronze workers, dyers, slave dealers, and bakers.

E. It has been said that the water around Thyatira was so adapted to dyeing that in no other place could the scarlet cloth be so permanently and perfectly dyed as in Thyatira--thus, it was noted for dyeing of material.

F. The city is mentioned in Acts 16:14-15 as the place where Lydia was from. She was the first recorded convert of the Lord Jesus from this area. Therefore, it is possible that through this contact with Paul that the group went back to Thyatira and a church had its beginning. We have no other record as to how or who started the church in Thyatira but there was one in existence at John's writing.

G. No doubt pagan influence was there with all their ungodly worship just like in the other cities we have dealt with. Also the Roman influence was equally strong in Thyatira. Yet in the midst, the Lord had one of His churches.

H. Prophetically this period deals in church history from about AD 600 to AD 1500.

I. Thyatira means a continual sacrifice.

5. "Write" = to express in written characters upon parchment or other material.

6. "These things" = refers to the things He is about to say to the church in Thyatira.

7. "The Son of God" = the Lord Jesus Christ; this is the first time the Lord is named; in the other churches He just gave His attributes; the reason this identity is given to the church could be for prophetic reasons:

A. There was a rise of the Nicolaitanes during the period of 600AD to 1500AD; this was a long dark period in history known as "The Dark Ages."

B. During this period "transubstantiation (tran-sub-stan'-she-a'-shen) was adopted by the state church. This means that when the elements of unleaven bread and unleaven fruit of the vine were prayed over by the priest, they actually became the very body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is false! This then was used in the daily mass which was introduced in 394 AD. This represents continual sacrifice--Thyatira's definition.

C. Christ died once. His body was broken once and His blood shed once. He is not a continual sacrifice. When we observe the Lord's supper, the elements are only types that point back to His broken body and shed blood. Moses died prematurely because he broke God's type--he smote the rock twice and Christ was only smitten once, and God judged him because he broke God's type. And He will continue to judge all who break His types. (Heb. 10:29-31)

D. Also during this time there was a rapid rise of the worship of Mary which had been introduced in 431 AD. The state church exalted her above the Lord by calling her "the mother of God" and "the queen of heaven." They even came to the place where they

said in order for one to get through to God one must pray to Mary. With all these things going on in the so called church, no wonder the Lord revealed Himself as the Son of God--co-eternal and co-equal with the Father.

E. In Pergamos, there were those who were holding fast His name but in Thyatira the conditions prophetically of the state church, the Nicolaitanes, were causing the dignity of His name to be degraded. Therefore, He reveals Himself to them as the Son of God who will judge.

8. He then gives two descriptions of Himself as the Son of God which denotes judgment:

A. "Hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire:"

1) Nothing escapes the all seeing eyes of God. In verse 23 the Lord told the church "He searcheth the reins and hearts." He knows your heart--you don't. (Jer. 17:9)

2) It has been said there is nothing more piercing than flaming fire. It penetrates all things.

3) The flame of fire speaks of the Lord judging our motive and He promised in verse 23, "I will give unto every one of you according to your works."

B. "His feet are like fine brass:"

1) Brass also is the symbol of judgment and being connected with the feet , it implies what Rev. 19:15 says, "He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God."

2) All judgment is committed to Jesus Christ and He will execute it faithfully. We are living in the day of grace when His feet are a thing of beauty as He brings good tidings of salvation (Isa. 52:7), but His day of grace and mercy will run out just like it did with Thyatira.

V. 19

1. "I" = the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. "Know" = to have absolute knowledge of the facts; the phrase is spoken to all seven churches and speaks of the Lord's absolute knowledge of the condition and circumstances of His people.

3. "Thy" = "thou" = the church of Thyatira; applies to all saints.

4. "Works" = acts; deeds; things done; this church was an active, energetic, and living church--a fruitful people for their works proved their faith. (James 2:20)

5. "Charity" = love in action; God kind of love; the saints of God have this love "shed abroad" in their hearts (Rom. 5:5) and is part of the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23); the nature of God is love (I John 4:16), and if one is saved they take on the nature of

God and exhibit that nature to others. 6. "Service" = ministry; their service or ministry was their love in action toward those in need; It is not merely the mechanical function of the job for which they were responsible but a demonstration of tender, loving, kindness in their ministry; this speaks of a labor of love which is one of the characteristics of the church at Thessalonica (I Thess. 1:3); it is possible to labor without love, but if you have love you will labor and minister to other's needs.

7. "Faith" = faithfulness; fidelity; this does not refer to faith exercised by one to be saved; refers to faithfulness to obligations and duties.

8. "Patience" = the quality of an individual who doesn't surrender to circumstances or succumb to trials.

6. "Thy works" = described as "the last to be more than the first;" their actions and deeds which had been recently performed were more numerous, and more commendable than those which had been rendered formerly; they were making progress.

V. 20

1. "Notwithstanding" = nevertheless; but; reveals a contrast of the good and right in verse 19 to the wrong He is about to reveal.

2. "I" = "my" = the Lord Jesus Christ--the Son of God.

3. "Thee" = "thou" = the church at Thyatira.

4. "Few things" = basically one area of problem that branch out into many areas; that one area involved a woman called Jezebel.

5. "Sufferest" = to allow; to permit; to tolerate; they did not judge and condemn sin.

6. Note the difference between Ephesus and Thyatira:

A. Ephesus was waning in love but would not tolerate evil.

B. Thyatira was gaining in love but tolerating evil.

C. Here we have two extremes and they are present today in our churches.

1) In some churches we find the moral and doctrinal perfectionists, the legalist, who are loveless and sometimes ruthless in their dealing with brethren whom they believe to have departed from the faith.

2) On the other hand there are those who preach love and toleration even to the extent of believing there can be peaceful co-existence between good and evil.

3) Somewhere there is the middle of the road. Lord, help us to find it!

7. "Woman" = "Jezebel" = probably not the real name of this woman but a name given to her as expressive of her character and influence; when her name is mentioned our mind automatically goes back to the OT character of Jezebel:

A. She was the daughter of the king of the Zidonians who were Baal worshipers.

B. She married Israel's wicked king Ahab, after which she set up Baal worship in Israel. She had the prophets of God killed but she could not overcome one--Elijah.

C. She was responsible for the death of Naboth so that Ahab could have his vineyard.

D. She died a horrible death 15 years after Elijah prophesied concerning her death. It has been said the mill of God's judgment grinds slow but it grinds exceedingly fine. (Isa. 55:11)

8. This woman probably had the same demons in her as the Jezebel of the OT. At least they were the same kind because they operated with the same evil persuasions.

9. "Prophetess" = a female who claimed to have power to reveal future happenings; her power did not come from the Holy Spirit since she caused people to be led away from truth which is the exact opposite of what Holy Spirit led individuals do. (John 16:13)

10. "Teach" = to impart instruction.

11. "Seduce" = to lead away into error and sin.

12. "My servants" = refers to the professors in Thyatira; the Lord called them such even though He knew some were not saved.

13. "Commit fornication" = to prostitute one's body to the lust of another; any sex relations without proper marriage; to permit one's self to be drawn away by another into idolatry.

14. "To eat things sacrificed unto idols" = this was forbidden by law; I know that under grace we can pray over such meat and eat it, but Paul said if it offends my brother he would not eat it. (I Cor. 6:12; I Tim. 4:4; I Cor. 8:13)

15. The true saints of God would not have yielded to such lifestyles no matter how much instruction or seduction they had. (Mat. 24:24) A saved person may get cold, side-tracked, and unconcerned for a short time but never deceived. (Mat. 25:1-5)

16. In Pergamos the church was married to the state while in Thyatira, we see the church turning away from the truth--apostasy. Therefore, Thyatira represents the apostate church.

17. When a church falls away from truth and listens to man's thinking and ideas, the days become dark. Prophetically this period is known as the dark ages. During this period of church history:

A. The state church claimed to be the voice of God.

B. A man in 606 AD was enthroned as the first actual pope and addressed as "Holy Father."

C. A woman was put in man's place and is substituted for Christ--speaking of Mary.

18. No wonder we see apostasy at its highest. And no wonder the Lord said I have somewhat against you--you have allowed this woman a place she should not be in. You have broken God's pattern. You have tolerated sin and evil instead of condemning and judging it. I have some things against thee.

V. 21

1. "I" = the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. "Her" = "she" = woman called Jezebel.

3. "Gave her space" = to give a particular time or season; probably involved some direct and solemn warning of the evil of her course.

4. "To repent" = to have a change of mind that leads to a change of direction and change of attitude; it is a turning from sin to the Lord to take up sides with God against one's self.

5. "Her fornication" = probably refers here to being drawn away into idolatry.

6. "She repented not" = the Lord dealt patiently with this woman over a period of time but she did not repent; she despised the Lord's forbearance and long-suffering, not believing that His goodness led her to repentance (Rom. 2:4); she showed no disposition to abandon her course.

7. Prophetically the ungodly church referred to as Jezebel over a period of time has not repented nor will she repent. Rome today is making friendly gestures toward the apostate protestant churches and the Baptist churches as well.

8. When the wrath of God breaks out upon this earth, even then, they will not repent. (Rev. 16:9-11; 9:20-21)

9. God is longsuffering but time for repentance will run out as the next verse reveals.

V. 22

1. "Behold" = an exclamation that arrests attention, and prepares the way for something unexpected and terrible.
2. "I" = the Lord Jesus Christ.
3. "Her" = Jezebel.
4. "Them" = "they" = "their" = those seduced and led astray by Jezebel; speaks of the "servants" of verse 20.
5. "Cast her into a bed" = "bed" is used in sharp contrast to the bed of the harlot with its illicit pleasure; speaks of judgment.
6. "Commit adultery" = one word in the Greek; the word is used of those who at a woman's solicitation are drawn away to idolatry--eating the things sacrificed to idols; figure of forsaking God, turning to the world, and having another master.
7. "Great tribulation" = pressure; affliction; great suffering; disease of the body or tortures of the soul; being in a strait between a rock and a hard place; tribulation is always used in conjunction with the saved while wrath is used concerning the lost; even professors experience this to expose what they do not have (Mat. 13:20-21); these same words are used in Rev. 7:14; "great" means "much" and Acts 14:22 declares plainly that the saints "must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God."
8. One of the real problems that leads to great error in rightly dividing the book of Revelation is that most people refer to "great tribulation" as the vials, trumpets, and thunders, but the Bible refers to that as the wrath of God which is not appointed to the saved. (I Thess. 5:9; 1:10)
9. "Except" = unless.
10. "Repent" = this Greek word includes both sorrow for the past and abandonment of the evil course of life; it is only by repentance that we can avoid the consequences of sin.
11. "Deeds" = actions; things done.
12. The professing church world will not repent and as a result even the godly remnant will suffer great tribulation but not the wrath of God.

V. 23

1. "I" = "he" = the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. "Her" = Jezebel.
3. "I will kill her children with death" = a strong mode of expression meaning He would certainly destroy them; speaks of those born of her teaching and doctrine.

4. "Death" = word seems to be some heavy judgment, by plagues, famine, or sword, by which they would be cut off.

5. "And all of the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts" = this means the design of this judgment will be so apparent that it will convince all that the Lord will know what is in the hearts of men, even the secret acts of wickedness that are concealed from human view; He will bring this (end time) to pass in such a way that He will get all the glory.

A. "All of the churches" = local visible bodies of baptized believers who meet together to glorify the Lord; yet now due to false doctrine they are diluted and infiltrated by "professors" = who have not been saved.

B. "Shall know" = to know by experience; they will know that the Son of God did it, not some big time evangelist, or politician, or a one world ruler; this includes the "professors" as well as the "possessors."

C. "Searcheth" = to examine; speaks of His omniscience--all knowledge; nothing passes the One whose eyes are like a flame of fire.

D. "Which" = who; the Lord Jesus is a person not a thing; therefore, this is masculine gender, not neuter gender.

E. "Reins" = used of inmost thoughts, feelings, and purposes of the soul.

F. "Hearts" = denotes the center of all spiritual life.

G. "I will give unto every one of you according to your works" = this is according to the law of sowing and reaping (Gal. 6:7); to the "professor" who is lost, he will stand before the Great White Throne of Judgment and be cast in the lake of fire (Rev. 20:11-15); to the saved he will stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ. (II Cor. 5:9-10; I Cor. 3:12-15)

V. 24

1. "But" = reveals the contrast from the general to the specific.

2. "You" = refers to those truly saved in the church--the remnant; these were saved, not because of idolatrous teachings, but in spite of it.

3. "And unto the rest in Thyatira" = this phrase is what is called in "apposition" = which explains or characterizes "you" in this verse; He had dealt primarily with the "professors" up to this point, now He wants to deal with the "possessors"--the saved--the remnant.

4. "As many as have not this doctrine" = a farther description of the saved--the remnant; those who have not embraced the teaching of Jezebel, or been contaminated with it.

5. "Which" = who; the saved were people not things; therefore, this is masculine gender not neuter gender.

6. "Which have not known the depths of Satan" = another description of the saved; the word "known" means to experience; the saved may have known about the depth of Satan as Paul said "I am not ignorant of his devices" (II Cor. 2:11), but they had not experienced the traps, snares, and depths of Satan.

7. "As they speak" = as they say; most commentaries do not even deal with this phrase because it is hard to determine exactly what it means; it seems to apply to those who propagated the doctrine of Jezebel as being the deep things of God (depths)"as they say" but our Lord calls what they propagate as being of Satan and not God.

8. "I will put upon you none other burden" = speaks of a burden or weight one cannot bear by himself; I'll not put on you more than you can stand; not to have experienced this doctrine and depths of Satan had caused great persecution on the saved; they were not able to belong to the trade guilds; therefore, they had no way to make a living which resulted in their being poor, despised, and rejected; but the Lord said I will not put upon you none other burden--you have been through enough.

V. 25

1. "But" = notwithstanding; however.

2. "That which you have *already*" = refers to verse 19; you have works, charity, service, faith, patience, and a growth in works.

3. "Hold fast" = keep; guard; secure; don't let go; the church as a whole had gone too far, but now He speaks to the remnant of saints; how long?

4. "Till I come" = refers to the time when He comes to "receive you unto myself" = rapture, not a Bible word but a Bible principle (John 14:3; I Thess. 4:16-17); the Greek construction conveys a touch of indefiniteness as to the date specified--"until the time whensoever I shall come."

5. "I" = the Lord Himself and none other. (Acts 1:11)

V. 26

1. "He" = "him" = refers to anyone who reads this message to Thyatira, whether they were a member of Thyatira or not; applies to us today since the message is narrowed down to individuals at this point.
2. "Overcometh" = means to gain the victory; to be a conqueror; the tense is a continuous habitual lifestyle; we usually think that this is referring to some supernatural spiritual person but the Bible makes it clear that this is simply one who has been saved (I John 5:4-5; Note: "believeth" is continuous action which indicates saving faith which never fails in a person after it is exercised); this phrase is also spoken in the message of all seven churches with different privileges added.
3. "Keepeth" = observe; watch and guard with obedience and faithfulness in mind.
4. "My" = "I" = the Lord Jesus Christ.
5. "My works" = what God requires of saints; note: said "my works" which is in sharp contrast with her work in verse 22 called "their deeds" which refers to their following what Jezebel required--her works. (verse 20b)
6. "Unto the end" = this does not refer to extinction or termination of time but it means the goal reached--the day of promotion for saints which is the day of physical death or the rapture whichever may come first; if the saved do this, then there is a special privilege given; basically all saved will be steadfast unto the end. (Heb. 3:6,14)
7. "To him will I give power over the nations" = means authority to rule; thus, associated with Him in future glory (Luke 19:17); this is in the millennium.

V. 27

1. "He" = the one who "overcometh"--saved, and "keepeth his works unto the end."
2. "Them" = nations.
3. "Shall rule them with a rod of iron" = this means "shall shepherd them"--speaks that the rule of nations is to be strong but it is to be loving also; to those who obey, they will be shepherded, and to those who resist, they will be dashed into pieces "as the vessels of potter shall they be broken to shivers."
4. "Even as I received of my Father" = the saved shall receive authority from the Lord Jesus just as He also received authority from His Father; this promise has a direct connection with Psa. 2:8-9. (Mat. 28:18; Rev. 20:6; Jude 14-15; I Cor. 6:2)

V. 28

1. "I" = the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. "Him" = the overcomer; the saved.

3. "I will give him the morning star" = the morning star is the Lord Jesus (Rev. 22:16); this means that He promises to give Himself to all the saved--overcomer; this promise is personal, to each saved individual the Lord promises to give Himself, all of Himself, all the time and at the same time He'll do the same for each of you if you're saved.

4. "Give" = to supply; furnish.

5. My! How big is our God, yet He is small enough to live in our hearts.

V. 29

1. "He that hath an ear" = this is referring to a spiritual ear not the physical ear; refers to the saved in context because of the promise mentioned; if you have been awakened, the Lord gives you an ear to hear; this phrase is mentioned in the message to all seven of the Churches; Jesus used this phrase during his earthly ministry and it is recorded eight times in the Bible, one of which is Mat. 13:9; you are blessed if you have an ear to hear.

2. "Let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches:"

A. "Hear" = to understand; to perceive the sense of what is said.

B. "The Spirit" = the Holy Spirit who is the teacher of the churches; He is regarded in the Scripture as the source of inspiration.

C. This phrase is used in the message to all the seven churches.

3. These two phrases together could call for self examination, therefore, it is narrowed down to individuals since every man has to give an account of himself in the judgment. (Rom. 14:11-12) Do you have an ear? Are you saved or have you been awakened? Examine yourself.

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